

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 117339
ORIGIN EUR-08

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O 082323Z MAY 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY MADRID IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 117339

LIMDIS FOR CHARGE

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: US, SP, PDIP

SUBJECT: DEMARCHE TO GOS

REF: MADRID 4939

1. ASSISTANT SECRETARY VEST CALLED IN SPANISH AMBASSADOR ROVIRA MAY 5 TO COMPLAIN THAT SPANISH OFFICIALS IN MADRID APPARENTLY HAD CONTRIBUTED INFORMATION WHICH APPEARED IN A MALICIOUS STORY IN MAY 4 WASHINGTON POST. THE POST STORY, ORIGINALLY AN LA TIMES PIECE BY MEISLER, SAID THAT THERE WAS DISPLEASURE IN SPAIN WITH AMBASSADOR TODMAN'S DESIGNATION AS AMBASSADOR BECAUSE HE WAS BLACK BUT ESPECIALLY BECAUSE HE WAS BEING REMOVED FROM HIS PRESENT POSITION FOR HIS "OPPOSITION" TO THE ADMINISTRATION'S POLICY ON HUMAN RIGHTS (ARTICLE HAS BEEN PROVIDED EMBASSY VIA ICA FACILITIES).

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2. VEST TOLD ROVIRA WE WERE CONCERNED AND DISMAYED PARTICULARLY SINCE THE ARTICLE HAD CITED SPANISH OFFICIALS, AND HE ASKED THE AMBASSADOR TO REPORT TO MADRID OUR CONCERN THAT GOS OFFICIALS NOT PROVIDE INNUENDOS WHICH COULD SERVE AS THE BASIS FOR FUTURE STORIES OF THIS KIND. ROVIRA SAID THE STORY WAS VERY REGRETTABLE, THAT OUR CONCERN WAS

JUSTIFIED, AND THAT HE WOULD REPORT TO MADRID.

3. LATER IN THE DAY, ACTING SECRETARY CHRISTOPHER TELEPHONED ROVIRA TO REINFORCE POINTS MADE BY VEST, AND TO EXPRESS PARTICULARLY CONCERN OVER FALSE ALLEGATION REPEATED IN POST ARTICLE THAT AMBASSADOR TODMAN'S RESIGNATION AS ASSISTANT SECRETARY HAD BEEN FORCED BECAUSE OF POLICY DISAGREEMENTS.

4. YOU MAY USE POINTS MADE BY ACTING SECRETARY AND ASSISTANT SECRETARY VEST IN APPROPRIATE FOLLOW-UP CONVERSATIONS WITH MFA UNDER SECRETARY SOLANO AND OTHER SENIOR GOS OFFICIALS. VANCE

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